

EN

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Answer given by Ms Zaharieva
on behalf of the European Commission
(17.1.2025)

1. As a general requirement for eligibility of the actions, funding cannot be provided under Horizon Europe ‘within or outside the EU for research activities that are prohibited in all Member States’¹. Furthermore, actions funded ‘shall comply with ethical principles and relevant EU, national and international law’². As a result, all Horizon Europe actions involving the use of animals, even when conducted outside the EU, have to comply with the relevant obligations of Directive 2010/63/EU³.

2. To ensure that the EU’s ethical and legal standards are upheld within the Research and Innovation Framework Programmes⁴, the ethics appraisal processes are in place to ensure that the required ethical standards are complied with, also when non-EU countries are involved in the actions. This entail, for animal research within the material scope of Directive 2010/63/EU, compliance with the relevant substantive obligations of Directive 2010/63/EU, the relevant national legal frameworks, and implementation of the principles of replacement, reduction and refinement.

In accordance with the Horizon Europe Regulation, the Horizon Europe ethics appraisal process encompasses a self-assessment and an ethics screening and/or ethics assessment by external experts. For actions raising ‘serious or complex ethics issues’, specific ethics obligations and periodic reporting requirements as the project progresses can be included in the grant agreement, for example to provide appropriate authorisations, copies of training certificates/licences of staff and details on the procedures to ensure animal welfare. Adherence to ethical standards and proper implementation of the actions can be verified at any time during the implementation of the grant.

¹ Article 18(2) of Regulation (EU) 2021/695 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 28 April 2021 establishing Horizon Europe, https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=uriserv%3AOJ.L_.2021.170.01.0001.01.ENG&toc=OJ%3AL%3A2021%3A170%3AFULL

² Article 19(1) of Regulation (EU) 2021/695.

³ <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/eli/dir/2010/63/oj/eng>

⁴ https://research-and-innovation.ec.europa.eu/funding/funding-opportunities/funding-programmes-and-open-calls/horizon-europe_en